



As summer days grow shorter, Michigan communities are observing the timeless annual ritual; **the first days of school**. The beginning of school is also a time when children are at increased risk of transportation related injuries from pedestrian, bicycle, school bus, and motor vehicle crashes. Many more children are on the road each morning and afternoon and drivers' patterns change. So as schools open their doors and more than 1.6 million students return to school in Michigan, it's time for everyone – motorists, parents, educators, and students – to improve their safety practices.

TIPS FOR ALL MOTORISTS

- **Slow down** and obey all traffic laws and speed limits.
- **Red overhead flashing lights, possibly accompanied by an extended stop arm, tell you the school bus is stopped to load or unload children.** State law requires you to stop at least 20 feet from the front or rear of a school bus when red lights are flashing and not proceed until the school bus resumes motion or until signaled by the school bus driver to proceed.
- **Be Alert and ready to stop. Prepare to stop for a school bus when overhead yellow lights are flashing.** Drive with caution if you see the yellow hazard warning lights flashing on a moving or stopped bus. Watch for children walking in the street, especially where there are no sidewalks. Watch for children playing and gathering near bus stops. Watch for children arriving late for the bus, who may dart into the street without looking for traffic. When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch for children walking or biking to school.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- **If your child rides a bus, have them at the bus stop five minutes prior to the buses arrival.**
- Help your children learn and practice the safety rules for walking, bicycling, or riding in a car or bus. Be a good role model, especially when you are with your children. Always buckle up in your car, always wear a helmet when biking and always follow pedestrian rules.
- Supervise young children walking or biking to school or as they wait at the school bus stop.

TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

- Teach young children the safety rules for walking, bicycling, or riding in a car or bus.
- Use **free** resources from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), such as *Kids, the School Bus and You* or NHTSA's safety series, *Getting to School Safely* series for free downloads and classroom handouts. Educators can find this information at the NHTSA web site: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov> .

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- If you ride a school bus, learn and practice the safety rules for waiting at the bus stop, getting on and off the bus, and riding the bus. If you walk to school, learn and practice the safety rules for pedestrians. Always cross at crosswalks or corner to corner. Obey all traffic lights or crossing guard instructions.
- Buckle up when you're riding in a car and ride in the back seat. It's the safest place for young people. Be a good role model for your younger brothers, sisters and friends and help them learn and practice safety rules.